



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, D.C. 20240

**JUL 13 2015**

Dear Tribal Leader:

The Department of the Interior (Department) is working with the National Invasive Species Council (NISC) to prepare a report of our recommendations for developing a framework for a national Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) program for invasive plants, animals, and other organisms. As part of this, we would like to include Tribal issues and perspectives in the report, so we would like to invite you or your designee to participate in a Tribal listening session on August 11, 2015 and Tribal consultation on August 13, 2015.

## **Background**

The October 2014 White House *Priority Agenda on Climate Resilience and Natural Resources* calls upon the Department and NISC to develop an EDRR framework by September 30, 2015; specific language in the Priority Agenda is copied below. Recognizing the importance of this issue to Tribes, we feel that it is critical that we work cooperatively with you, as well as with Federal and state governments in an effort to combat this problem in an effective and efficient manner.

A Federal work group formed in February and a non-Federal advisory team was assembled in March. A subset of Tribes working on invasive species projects was contacted to serve on the advisory team, along with representatives from state agencies, regional groups, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and industry. The advisory team holds monthly calls and is providing guidance on and reviewing preliminary components of the report.

## **Issues of Potential Interest to Tribes**

Non-native invasive plants, animals, and pathogens—such as Emerald ash borer, feral swine, Burmese python, Russian olive, and Asian carp—harm native plants and animals and the lands and waters on which species depend. Invasive plants and animals know no boundaries and spread uncontrollably across public, private, and Tribal lands. Detecting infestations when they are still localized and rapidly responding to control them helps to minimize impacts to natural and cultural resources, and it costs less than long-term control programs. As you can imagine, cooperation is critical for success with such efforts.

Tribal expertise and unique perspectives that we hope to gain may include—but not be limited to—the following:

- Natural and cultural resources impacted by invasive species
- Tribal interests in the context of a landscape-level approach to planning
- Incorporating Tribal interests in the EDRR framework
- Tribal efforts in the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species

Materials for your review will be posted to [http://www.fws.gov/fisheries/tribal\\_consultation.html](http://www.fws.gov/fisheries/tribal_consultation.html) by close of business Friday, July 31, 2015.

While the primary focus of the report is providing recommendations for submission in September, our collaboration may help to open the channels of communication about this important issue in regard to budgets, unmet needs, and opportunities for further coordination.

We are committed to ongoing and meaningful Tribal engagement and have scheduled the following Tribal listening session and consultation:

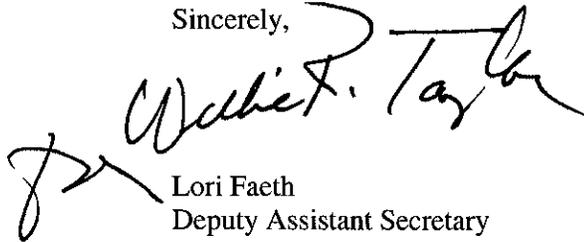
<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>Listening Session</u> Tuesday, August 11, 2015	1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. (EST)	By teleconference 1-877-891-6970 Passcode: 6048002
<u>Consultation</u> Thursday, August 13, 2015	9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (CDT)	Bureau of Indian Affairs Midwest Regional Office 5600 W. American Blvd., Suite 500 Minneapolis, MN 55437

Representatives of the Office of the Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget and National Invasive Species Council will participate in the listening session and consultation.

You may submit written comments to [invasivespecies@ios.doi.gov](mailto:invasivespecies@ios.doi.gov) (please include "Tribal Comment: EDRR" in the subject line of the email) or fax to (202) 208-4867 until August 25, 2015.

Should you have any questions regarding this invitation, please contact Mr. Jerry Gidner, Policy, Management and Budget Tribal Liaison Officer, at [Jerold.Gidner@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Jerold.Gidner@ios.doi.gov) or (202) 302-9731.

Sincerely,



Lori Faeth  
Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Policy and International Affairs

**Specific EDRR language in the Priority Agenda:**

*Within twelve months, the Secretary of the Interior, working with other members of the National Invasive Species Council, including Department of Commerce (NOAA), EPA, and USDA, will work with states and tribes to develop a framework for a national Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) program that will build on existing programs to assist states and tribes in forestalling the stress caused by the establishment and spread of additional invasive species populations, thereby improving the resilience of priority landscapes and aquatic areas. This will include the development of a plan for creating an emergency response fund to increase the capacity of interagency and inter-jurisdictional teams to tackle emerging invasive species issues across landscapes and jurisdictions. - Priority Agenda Enhancing the Climate Resilience of America's Natural Resources, October 2014*

For a copy of the Priority Agenda, please visit:

[https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/enhancing\\_climate\\_resilience\\_of\\_americas\\_natural\\_resources.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/enhancing_climate_resilience_of_americas_natural_resources.pdf)